

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 27, 2020

Robert R. Redfield, M.D.
Director
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027

Dear Dr. Redfield,

We write today with grave concerns about new guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that suggest not all those exposed to COVID-19 need to be tested. The U.S. currently has the most deaths and cases in the world and our states are struggling to get the pandemic under control. Widespread testing is crucial to our public health and safety considering the sustained high rate of spread in the country, the prevalence of asymptomatic cases and our reliance on testing to track the status of the virus in our communities.

That is why Congress has appropriated more than \$25 billion to ramp up testing efforts with the explicit purpose to research, develop, validate, manufacture, purchase, administer, and expand capacity for testing to “effectively monitor and suppress COVID-19 including tests for both active infection and prior exposure.”¹ Funding was not provided for the purpose of minimizing the case count.

Without explanation, it is difficult to comprehend how this updated guidance will work to provide any public health benefits to our country. We request answers to the following questions by Monday, August 31, 2020. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

- 1) Did any officials at the White House request or direct CDC to issue this change in guidelines?
 - a) If so, please identify those officials.
 - b) Please identify all Executive Branch components and officials, including but not limited to components and officials in the White House and HHS, involved in decision-making relating to this change.
 - c) Please provide copies of all correspondence between CDC and officials at the White House and HHS relating to the change in testing guidelines.
- 2) Did CDC personnel express concerns, orally or in writing, to you or other CDC leadership about political motivations relating to the amendments to the testing policy?

¹ Public Law 116-139.

- a) If so, did you elevate those concerns within HHS or take any other action in response to them? If you did not do so, why not?
- b) Please provide copies of any correspondence or other documentation relating to such concerns.
- 3) Please identify the criteria by which CDC determined to make the change to the testing policy. Please provide documentation that supported this policy change.
- 4) Was analysis conducted regarding the impact of this policy change with respect to communities of color and vulnerable populations?
 - a) If no such analysis was conducted, please explain why not.
 - b) Please provide copies of any correspondence or other documentation regarding to this analysis or lack thereof.
- 5) Prior to the amendments to the testing guideline, did CDC consult with states, cities, and localities to help them understand the implications of this policy change for their populations? If not, why not?

Congress has provided funding and public health departments and private partners have worked tirelessly to ensure there is ample testing for our communities, especially the most vulnerable, and we are still falling short. This new guidance is counterproductive to these efforts. Until a sufficient explanation and the answers to our questions are provided that ensures to the public that this new guidance improves the effort to quickly identify the spread of the virus, testing should be expanded, not limited. As such, this recent guidance should be immediately halted. We await your timely response.

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Deb Haaland
Member of Congress



Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

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